

REMARKS

This amendment and response is responsive to the Office Communication dated December 15, 2005 (Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment) and is identical in substance to the Amendment and Response filed on December 6, 2005. The status identifiers in the instant response have been amended to comply with Patent Office rules.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge that claims 66-69 and 71-76 have been allowed. Applicants are further grateful for withdrawal of all outstanding grounds of rejection as set forth in the Office Action at pg. 2.

Claim 53 has been amended and new claims 88-96 added. Support for the claim amendment and new claims can be found throughout the application including the Drawings and claims as originally filed.

Particular support for the amendment to claim 53 can be found on pg. 3, lines 19-22; pg. 5, first paragraph; pg. 6, lines 10-21; pg. 31, lines 13-23 and elsewhere throughout the application.

Addition of New Claims to Loaded MHC complexes

New claim 88 features a ***loaded*** single chain MHC class II-peptide complex in which the presenting peptide is *non-covalently linked to the MHC molecule* and *non-covalently bound to the peptide binding groove of the MHC molecule*. Claim 88 further recites that the claimed complex is ***capable of being recognized by a CD4+ T cell***. That language was added to comport with the Examiner's comments at pg. 2 of the Action (stating that loaded complexes featuring this specific T cell activity are enabled).

Particular support for new claim 88 can be found at pg. pg. 3, lines 19-22; pgs. 3-4, bridging paragraph; pg. 5, lines 7-15; pgs. 29-30, bridging paragraph; pgs. 32-35 (disclosing

methods of testing loaded MHC complexes using CD4+ cells, for instance); pgs. 41-42; and elsewhere in the specification.

Dependent claims 89-96 have been written along lines of claims 54, 55, 57-63, respectively.

No new matter has been added by virtue of the amendment to claim 53 or addition of the new claims.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants submit herewith an Information Disclosure Statement that includes references considered in predecessor applications 08/596,387 (now US Pat. No. 5,869,270) and 09/067,615 (now US Pat. No. 6,309,645). Additionally submitted are various issued patents and patent applications that may be of some interest to the Office.

Submission of the IDS at this time is not to be taken as evidence that a search has been conducted and/or as an admission that any of the references are prior art. However, it is believed that consideration of the references will further appreciation of the claimed invention.

35 USC § 112, first paragraph

Claims 53-55, 57, 58 and 60-63 stand rejected as not being enabled for a single chain MHC class-II peptide complex “where the presenting peptide is not one that would be non-covalently bound by the peptide binding groove of the MHC class II”. However, the Office did state that the **specification was enabled for a “single chain MHC class II peptide complex that is empty** or where the presenting peptide is one that would be non-covalently bound by the MHC class II molecule such that the MHC/peptide complex can be recognized by a CD4+T cell”. While Applicants respectfully disagree with the stated basis of rejection, grounds for it have been addressed.

For instance, amended **claim 53 now features an empty single chain MHC class II molecule**. The Office has stated that the claim is enabled. Action at pg. 2. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

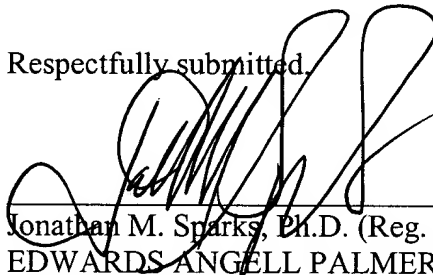
35 USC § 112, second paragraph

Claim 59 stands rejected as being indefinite. While Applicants respectfully disagree with the stated basis for rejection, grounds for it have been addressed. The claim has been canceled. Withdrawal of the rejection is thus requested.

CONCLUSION

It is believed the application is in condition for immediate allowance, which action is earnestly solicited. If a telephone conversation with Applicants' agent would expedite the prosecution of the above-identified application, the examiner is urged to call the undersigned at (617) 439-4444.

Respectfully submitted,



Jonathan M. Sparks, Ph.D. (Reg. No. 53,624)
EDWARDS ANGELL PALMER & DODGELL
P.O. Box 55874
Boston, Massachusetts 02205
Tel.: 617.439.4444
Fax 617.439.4170

Customer No. 21874

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